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stitutionality of the latter act, the tribunician assembly, in passing it, kept itself strictly within the limits of precedent<sup>1</sup>.

In this paper we are considering, not the abstract equity or the expediency of the procedure, but the legality. The conflict of opinion—both ancient and modern—in the case can be rightly settled from the point of view neither of American nor of English usage, but solely on the ground of Roman law. And the question was decided adversely to the senate, in the Roman way, through the *Lex Clodia De Provocatione*, by the supreme power; for the Twelve Tables declare that what the people vote last shall be law and valid. In favor of Cicero's cause it must be said, however, that in the trial and execution of these conspirators he acted not capriciously and arbitrarily, but on a principle he believed to be legal and for the best interests of the commonwealth, which he dearly loved.

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### REVIEW

*The Greek Genius and its Meaning to Us.* By R. W. Livingstone. Oxford: at the Clarendon Press (1912). Pp. 250. \$2.00.

Mr. Livingstone disarms criticism by disclaiming finality. His object, on the whole admirably accomplished, is to stimulate and suggest, and to help other students of Greek life and literature, whether by agreement or disagreement, "to give some definition and coherency to the fleeting impressions, which are often all that is left after ten years' study of the Greeks". Ten years! It is the number of Epic convention and also of Philistine diatribes on the waste of time in classical education. Do they really study Greek ten years in England? No wonder that they find our Rhodes Scholars imperfectly prepared. I do not wish to cavil at the phrases which Mr. Livingstone employs to justify and recommend his ambitious undertaking. But the implication that the possession of a few comprehensive formulas summing up the Greek genius is the chief abiding value of the study of Greek is a wide-spread delusion of popular culture. It is this temper that constrains the extension lecturer on literature to harp on his author's 'message'. Is the Greek spirit the gospel of beauty, freedom, lucidity, directness, human versatility, or some happy blend of them all? And how many of these elements would be omitted by an optimistic exchange professor expounding the French, German or American spirit?

Mr. Livingstone, however, cleverly anticipates the objection that Greek civilization endured for fifteen hundred years and that the genius of this or of any race is too vast and complicated a thing to be summed up in a formula. In spite of exceptions,

variations and 'sports', there is a central tradition of what is most significant for us and at the same time perhaps most representative of the true national soul. It is this he seeks—in literature rather than in art and life, though he elsewhere, indeed, seems to contradict himself by saying that "the portrait which would serve us best is that of an ordinary man"—in Athens rather than in Sparta, and in the period 600-400 B.C. in which Nietzsche found the real Greece, though here again there is a touch of inconsistency when he later speaks of himself (204) as seeking "notes or characteristics which are found alike in Homer and in Lucian, in Herodotus and in the late epigrammatists of Byzantium".

Self-contradiction, indeed, is as inseparable from this theme as it is from mythology. The philosophy or science of literature is neither philology nor science. It is art, a form of rhetoric. This is not to condemn such work, as Mr. Livingstone's or the more sober book, *Greek View of Life*, by Mr. Lowes Dickinson, or the vast repertoires of opinions about the Greeks tabulated by Billeter. It is a branch of literature that appeals to the human instinct for short cuts to omniscience and Pisgah prospects of promised lands of culture. But it needs the control of the scholar's conscience in the writer and a challenging critical alertness in the reader; otherwise in striving for the impossible formula that shall express the totality of the Greek spirit we shall blur the definitions and distinctions that really explain and interpret a Pindar, an Aeschylus, a Sophocles, a Euripides, a Thucydides, a Plato, a Lucian. A generalization that excludes these or distorts our view of them may cost more than it gives.

Mr. Livingstone abandons himself to a succession of such generalizations, which he has not always succeeded in harmonizing with one another, or with his criticism of particular authors. His introductory chapters on *The Note of Beauty*, *The Note of Freedom*, *The Note of Directness* are excellent, nor are they any the worse for being in the main conventional, that is, sane and true, or for repeating much that Symonds, Jebb, Arnold, Ruskin and Pater have made familiar to the readers of the last generation. We need not hold him to too strict an account for the seeming contradictions into which he falls in the endeavor to attribute every type of excellence to the Greeks. In *The Note of Humanism* he tells us in one place (113) that the Greeks had not felt the difficulty of reconciling the higher and the lower nature, and did not need the solution of Christian grace. Yet some twenty pages later we read (136) that the Greeks "had indeed the emotional temperament of a southern nation, but they were continually fighting to keep it in subjection to reason. . . . Often the struggle ended in defeat; but the greatest Greeks

<sup>1</sup> Botsford, *Roman Assemblies*, 446, and Note 1.

did succeed in reigning in the rebellious horse, and reaching an Olympian peace. . . ." It is perhaps not Mr. Livingstone's fault that the word 'humanism' has been spoiled for all rational uses by Mr. Schiller and the Pragmatists. But though the chapter on The Note of Humanism is pleasant reading, it is quite impossible to accept as a single 'Note' an abstraction so comprehensive or so equivocal as to include the psychological relativity of Protagoras, the mythological anthropomorphism of Homer, the ordinary Greek's disbelief in a future life, the love of children illustrated by an anecdote in Herodotus, the cult of the body, the "genial ruffianism of Hipponax", the homely bourgeois naturalness of the *homme sensuel moyen* of Aristophanes, the Philistine common-sense of Xenophon, and the opportunities for personal culture provided by the age of Pericles in Macaulay's highly colored description. "It was the ordinary Athenian", Mr. Livingstone adds, to cap the climax, "who felt himself possessed and maddened with the passion for knowledge". For it is thus he renders and applies to the man in the street the phrases in which Alcibiades justifies his outspokenness to the initiates of philosophy in the Symposium.

More serious is the difficulty of reconciling Mr. Livingstone's general canons of true Hellenism with his account of particular authors, and his estimates of modern interpreters of the Greek genius. "In Germany", he says, "Professor von Wilamowitz, in England Professor Murray have entered into the Greek mind to a degree impossible to previous generations". This judgment is intelligible as an expression of enthusiastic admiration for the rare union of literary genius and high scholarship. But it is flatly incompatible with Mr. Livingstone's own interpretation of the Greek mind when he writes on page 21:

Even in the greatest Greeks there is much that we must ignore. Supposing Plato and Pindar to have a vein of Orphism, and Pythagoras queer ideas on numbers; supposing Aeschylus to be touched with mysticism and Euripides with mysticism and morbidity, the student of the Greek genius has a right to disregard these peculiarities, if he feels that he has his hand on an essential quality in Hellenism and that they are inconsistent with it.

If we are to take these words seriously, how can we in the same breath accept as our guide to the interpretation of the Greek spirit a scholar who bends all the resources of his genius and ingenuity to emphasizing everywhere precisely the traits of the Greek mind and the accidents of Greek culture which we regard as untypical? If, to take one of many available minor illustrations, Greek religion, as Mr. Livingstone believes, is fundamentally anthropomorphic and plastic, how can he follow the leadership of a critic who, in the November Atlantic, extracts from a skeptical Voltairian quip in Euripides the lesson that the Greek god was not an anthropomorphic statue, but the "wine of the

world". The essential quality of the Greek mind for Mr. Livingstone is the note of directness, which includes lucidity, rationalism, freedom from eccentricity, excess, superstition, humbug, and false sentiment. I believe that he is right, though like all who exploit this topic he heightens the contrast by treating as distinctive of the modern spirit mediaeval and renaissance conceptions which are as obsolete for the post-Darwinian generations as the Theogony of Hesiod was to Plato or Epicurus. But this view of the essential rationalism of the Greek mind ought to commit Mr. Livingstone in all courtesy, but in all firmness, to the repudiation of the presuppositions and the methods of the brilliant anthropological, mystic sentimental, and, we may now add, sociological school that has increasingly dominated English scholarship since the death of Jebb; and on which Professor Wilamowitz, I am pleased to note, has recently pronounced judgment in "petitio principii und schillernde Möglichkeiten sind üble Surrogate des Beweises".

Of a similar character is the difficulty which Mr. Livingstone finds in fitting the great writers of Greece into his scheme. When in chapter five he undertakes to illustrate his 'Notes' in the concrete, he dismisses for various reasons Thucydides, Aristophanes, Aeschylus and Sophocles. Plato is reserved for a chapter on some exceptions, and Euripides is postponed as belonging to the age of transition that initiates the decline. Pindar and Herodotus remain as types of Greek humanism. They are excellent types and Mr. Livingstone writes interestingly about them, but they do not especially well illustrate his chief 'Notes' of the Hellenic spirit, and, though he elsewhere recognizes Pindar as one of the world's great poets, his treatment of him here is spoiled by unconscious concessions to the twentieth century superstition that discovers more 'intellect' in Candida or in Ghosts than in the fourth Pythian. Pindar is to him the "commonplace intellect" and the smug comfortable Philistine whom the clever irony of the most popular of the present-day English interpreters of the Greek genius has taught us to patronize if not to scorn. The Nemesis of misinterpretation always dogs this blaspheming of the highest. In the noble passage on success and wealth in Ol.2.53 ff. Mr. Livingstone, under the influence of these prepossessions, sees only an idea which he can find suggested in the fourth chapter of Xenophon's Symposium and expressed in Tennyson's Northern Farmer but which is not in this ode:

"Proputty, proputty's ivrything 'ere,  
an', Sammy, I'm blest  
If it isn't the saame oop yonder,  
fur them as 'as it's the best".

"Wealth joined to . . . the gifts of nature . . . will give you chances which the ordinary man has

not, it will suppress the deeper cares, and in the end it will bring you to the Paradise of the Just. So at least Pindar implies. A strange key it seems with which to open heaven (141)". "And yet", he condescendingly adds, "there is some sense in Pindar's view; for the possession of wealth puts a man beyond the vulgar temptations of poverty", etc., etc. Is there no one left to appreciate Pindar in the country of Jebb, Myers, Matthew Arnold and Ruskin? It ought not to be necessary to say that "Pindar implies" nothing of what is here attributed to him. The words εἰθὲ [γε?] νιν ἔχων τις οἶδεν τὸ μέλλον, etc., are a transition to the myth of judgment. The religious tone of the passage is that of the Preacher's admonition 'But know thou that for all these things God shall bring thee into judgment'. It is not a promise that wealth will purchase heaven, but a warning that we shall be called to account for our use of opportunities, a warning whispered into the victor's ear in the very height of the triumph and exaltation which the Greek psalmist dreaded as the precursor of Hybris.

This minute scrutiny of special passages may be thought illiberal. But sober criticism must judge an interpreter's employment of the flash-light of the Universal according as he makes it serve to illuminate or to distort our vision of the particular. Nobody can escape the fallacy of generalization from insufficient evidence in this kind of work, but we can at least eschew false point-making in the texts of extant authors.

The description which the Symposium gives of Socrates standing through the night absorbed in meditation is a striking illustration of the contradictory uses to which good scholars may wrest the same passage. Professor Burnet, in his recently published *Phaedo*, triumphantly cites it in confirmation of his argument that Socrates was a Pythagorean mystic. To Mr. Livingstone it is proof positive that Socrates "though unfurnished with laboratories and test-tubes" "had something more important, if less imposing than these—the spirit of science". If constrained to choose I should prefer Mr. Livingstone's interpretation here, for Plato here and elsewhere represents Socrates's fits of abstraction not as the Indian fakir's contemplation of his navel, but as the thinker's absorption in a definite problem. But I would not press this or any other text quite so hard as the exigencies of conjectural philology or the universal philosophy of literature require. Mr. Livingstone yields to this temptation perhaps less frequently than some of his eminent contemporaries. But I will conclude with a few more examples submitted to his sober second thoughts. Is it not an equivocation on page 225 to contrast the ethical *goodness* of which "the English have a reasonable love" with the ἀρετὰς of the chorus in the *Medea*, which the version quoted by himself renders 'godlike endeavor'. Is it quite fair to illustrate the difference between

ancient and modern feeling about nature by contrasting with Alcman's purple sea-bird of spring so extreme an instance of irrational sentimentality as Mrs. Browning's verses on the sea gull (75)? And to waive this point, is it quite true that Alcman himself "sees <in the bird only> what an unspoilt and happy child might see in it" (77)?

O maidens with voices of yearning plaint in honey-sweet accents heard,  
The limbs of your singer wax old and faint; ah!  
would I might be as the bird.

A very little ingenuity would enable the maintainer of the opposite thesis to identify this wistful return of the old poet upon himself with the modern mood of Burns:

How can ye chant, ye little birds,  
And I sae fu' o' care?

It is perhaps the part of a spoil-sport to object to point-making by the juxtaposition of extremes; and yet again I ask what possible significance for the genius of either Greek or English literature can there be in a comparison of the "different spirit" of Homer and—Oscar Wilde? And why in the name of all that is pure smirch Nausicaa by the suggestion of Wilde's *Salome*, when Howell's *Indian Summer* was available to illustrate a modern artist's treatment of the faint, sweet, unreal attraction of a girl toward an interesting older man?

In translating Euripides *Hippolytus* 194 by "*Sick of desire for an unknown bright thing beneath the earth*" Mr. Livingstone has apparently adopted along with the ideas of anthropological and Orphic philology its peculiar methods of construing Greek.

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PAUL SHOREY.

### THE NEW YORK LATIN CLUB

The New York Latin Club met for its second luncheon of the current year at the Hotel Gregorian on February 8. Dr. B. W. Mitchell, of the Central High School, Philadelphia, President of The Classical Association of the Atlantic States, read a most delightful paper entitled *In the Shadow of his Tail*; as the paper will soon be published in *THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY*, it would be unwise to give a resumé, which would necessarily fail to express the interest aroused by the address. Professor Knapp wittily presented the thanks of the Club to Dr. Mitchell.

The Committee which had been appointed by the president to take action in regard to the death of Mr. Harry Towle, an ex-president of the Club, and principal of the Curtis High School, New Brighton, Staten Island, reported through its chairman, Dr. Vlyman. The resolutions were adopted by the Club by a standing vote and were ordered spread on the minutes of the Club.

The President, Professor McCrea, then stated that inasmuch as the city syllabus stated that about